

Forgiveness

My heart was heavy, for its trust had been
Abused, its kindness answered with foul wrong;
So, turning gloomily from my fellow-men,
One summer Sabbath day I strolled among
The green mounds of the village burial-place;
Where, pondering how all human love and hate
Find one sad level; and how, soon or late,
Wronged and wrongdoer, each with meekened face,
And cold hands folded over a still heart,
Pass the green threshold of our common grave,
Whither all footsteps tend, whence none depart,
Awed for myself, and pitying my race,
Our common sorrow, like a nighty wave,
Swept all my pride away, and trembling I forgave!

John Greenleaf Whittier

LibriVox volunteers bring you 13 recordings of Forgiveness by John Greenleaf Whittier. This was the Weekly Poetry project for June 2, 2013.

What some of our readers thought..."The whole poem consists of just a single sentence, but a very complex one, loaded with both independent and subordinate clauses and participial phrases...

Following his admirable example of gentle tolerance, I forgive his dangling participles." (Leonard Wilson);

"Kudos to the poet for writing about forgiveness and mortality in a graveyard without letting any gods elbow in!" (Jason Mills)

(Summary by David Lawrence)

Read by Librivox volunteers. Total running time: 00:15:28

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